

America that did not begin in someone's garage, someone's attic, someone's basement, where people did not work out of a car for a period of time in an effort to try to grow that business. Time and again small businesses, not large corporations, have pulled our economy out of trouble by creating the jobs and the products of the future.

For many entrepreneurs, the SBA is their only chance to earn their fair share of the American dream. As we celebrate small businesses and entrepreneurship this week, we all have a responsibility to defend that dream. We need to ensure that the SBA is adequately funded. We need to ensure legislation never shortchanges small businesses, and we need to provide a real plan for small business health care. The doors of opportunity must be open to everyone.

ALBERT EISELE'S ARTICLES ON IRAQ

Mr. DAYTON. Mr. President, when I went to work in the Washington office of then-Senator Walter Mondale from Minnesota as a young, beginning legislative assistant in 1975, Al Eisele was a Washington correspondent for the St. Paul Dispatch and Pioneer Press, Duluth Herald and News-Tribune, and other Knight-Ridder newspapers. In 1976, after Senator Mondale was elected as Jimmy Carter's Vice President, he named Mr. Eisele as his press secretary and senior adviser, a position that Mr. Eisele held for the next 4 years.

"He previously covered me as a Washington correspondent for Minnesota newspapers during my 11 years in the Senate, so I obviously know him well," Senator Mondale later explained. "He was one of the most well-respected and knowledgeable reporters in Washington, with a reputation for even-handedness, incisive reporting, and personal integrity, which is why I asked him to join my staff."

After the Carter-Mondale administration, Mr. Eisele helped found the Center for National Policy in Washington; was a fellow at the Institute of Politics at Harvard; served as an assistant to Mr. William C. Norris, the founder and chief executive officer of Control Data Corporation in Minnesota; and started his own literary agency and international consulting firm, Cornerstone Associates.

For the past 10½ years, this native Minnesotan has been instrumental in the success of *The Hill*, a nonpartisan, nonideological newspaper covering Congress, that he helped found. Indeed, the April 27, 2005, issue of *The Hill* includes the 500th column Mr. Eisele has written since the newspaper's inaugural issue of September 21, 1994. In addition, he has acted as a mentor for more than 50 young journalists whom he helped train and who now work for many major newspapers, magazines, and broadcast organizations.

Last month, Mr. Eisele traveled to Iraq to get, as he wrote, "a firsthand

look at what the American military is up against in this greatest projection of American power since Vietnam."

With his customary dedication, he did not just visit Iraq; rather, he traveled throughout the country for 10 days and interviewed everyone, from generals to privates, high-ranking Iraqi officials to ordinary citizens, visiting Members of Congress, fellow journalists covering the war, and private contractors involved in rebuilding Iraq's infrastructure.

His subsequent articles and columns in *The Hill* provided many compelling accounts of personal realities there, as well as very valuable insights.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that those articles be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

SENATORS ENCOURAGED BY PROGRESS IN IRAQ

BAGHDAD, Mar. 23, 2005.—Senate Minority Leader Harry Reid (D-Nev.) led a bipartisan Senate delegation to Baghdad Tuesday and left little doubt that the Senate will soon approve an \$81 billion supplemental appropriation passed by the House last week, most of which will go to pay for rebuilding Iraq's war-torn economy and countering insurgent violence.

Reid and his six colleagues held a news conference at the end of a whirlwind one-day visit during which they met with top U.S. military and diplomatic officials in Iraq and leaders of the three internal factions competing for control of the government being established in the wake of the January elections.

Reid, who was making his first trip to Iraq, said the Senate will take up the supplemental appropriations bill when it returns after the Easter recess, and indicated there is little real opposition to it. He stressed the need for continued U.S. support for reconstruction efforts, along with training Iraqi security forces to replace U.S. military personnel and help bolster the Iraqi economy and political structure.

"Everyone understands that reconstruction is an important part of the U.S. mission here," he declared.

Reid and his colleagues, who included four Democrats and two Republicans, all indicated they are encouraged by signs of progress in carrying out the three-pronged U.S. strategy of support for bolstering Iraq's security forces, economy and political system.

"One of the people we met with today called Iraq 'an infant democracy,' and we can't leave this infant alone," said Minority Whip Dick Durbin (D-Ill.). "I believe what we are seeing here is good."

Sen. Robert Bennett (R-Utah) compared this visit with an earlier visit he made last year. "I find a quiet optimism instead of a cautious optimism," he said. He added, "I think that the elections and the strengthening of the Iraqi security forces have given us hope that the seed of democracy has been planted here. There's still a lot to do and we still have a lot to worry about, but the signs are more optimistic now than before."

Even Sen. Barbara Boxer (D-Calif.), who has been a leading critic of the Bush administration's Iraq policy, seemed upbeat about the future of the new Iraq government.

Declaring that the success of Iraq's future stability "greatly depends on the training of Iraqi security forces," she said, "we got a very, very upbeat report" from the top U.S.

military officials, including Gen. George Casey Jr., who commands the multinational coalition forces, and Lt. Gen. David Petraeus, commander of the NATO training mission here.

She added that it's essential that the new government, which will be put together in the coming months, include all elements of Iraqi society, especially women. "I think it's fair to say that all of us today gave that message" to the leaders of the three main ethnic factions in Iraq, the majority Shiites, the minority Sunnis and the Kurds.

However, Boxer also indicated after the group's meeting with the man who is expected to be Iraq's next prime minister, Ibrahīm al-Jaafari, that he is not as upbeat about the quality of the Iraqi police and security forces.

"My sense was that he was certainly in no rush to hand over security to his new police force," she said.

Other members of the Senate delegation included Patty Murray (D-Wash.), Lamar Alexander (R-Tenn.) and freshman Ken Salazar (D-Colo.).

Salazar, who was making his first visit to Iraq, said, "This trip has enforced the enormity of the challenge in Iraq and the need to help the Iraqi people."

"TRANSLATORS ARE A SPECIAL TARGET"

BAGHDAD, Mar. 25, 2005.—After 38 years in the United States, Paul Orahā is back in his native Baghdad and working only a short distance from the neighborhood where he grew up. But he's not about to look up any old friends who might still be around.

"We are a target now," said Orahā, who works as a translator for the U.S. Embassy and U.S.-led Multinational Coalition. "Translators are a special target because many Iraqis feel we are traitors because we're working for Americans against Iraq."

Orahā, 65, left Baghdad with his family in 1966 for Detroit, where his father, a Mercedes Benz parts supplier, found work in the auto industry. While his personal history is different, Orahā's situation is the same as thousands of other Iraqis whose lives are at risk because they work for, or cooperate with, the Multinational Coalition.

Many Iraqi civilians, as well as military and security personnel, government officials and civic leaders have been killed or wounded by Iraqi insurgents and foreign Islamic extremists since the March, 2003 invasion that ousted Saddam Hussein.

Orahā, who later moved from Detroit to San Diego and served in the U.S. Navy, returned to Iraq in July, 2004, now works and lives in the heavily guarded international enclave in the middle of Baghdad known as the Green Zone. A nearby bridge that commemorates the bloody 1958 coup in which Saddam's Baathist Party took power links the Karada neighborhood across the Tigris River where he grew up.

And even though there are constant reminders of the terrorist threat—several mortar rounds hit the bridge on Monday night but did not injure anyone—Orahā feels the security situation is improving.

"This area used to get hit almost every day, but now it's almost every other week," he said while smoking a cigarette and drinking coffee one recent morning outside the Rasheed Hotel where and he and many other Americans and foreigners live. "Security is the biggest problem here, but I think we're making tremendous progress because the attacks have slowed down."

Orahā said he thinks most Iraqis "want us to be here and stay here. They're very appreciative that we got rid of Saddam and they look forward to having a better life. But they're very concerned about the security

situation. They feel if it improves, they will have an opportunity to rebuild their country and enjoy the benefits of democracy."

However, Orahra cautioned that many Iraqis are concerned that the U.S. will not take the drastic steps they feel are needed to discourage future terrorist activity.

"They think the U.S. is not going to be tough enough in dealing with the terrorists, that they're too concerned about the human rights of terrorists who are blowing up people. They feel they will take that as a sign of weakness and operate with impunity.

He added, "As an American, I believe in the Constitution and its guarantees of the rights of those accused of crimes. But I agree with Iraqis that we have to be tougher with terrorists. Many Iraqis think some of these people should be executed and the world should know about it."

However, Orahra predicts that the new government that soon will be elected "is going to get tougher on terrorists because they're going to have to answer to the Iraqi people, who are tired of terrorism."

IMPROVISED EXPLOSIVES BECOMING MORE DEADLY IN IRAQ

MOSUL, IRAQ, Mar. 28, 2005.—They're one of the worst nightmares for American military personnel or anyone traveling with them on the dangerous roads of Iraq, even if you're surrounded by tons of armor plate and moving at high speed.

They're called IED's, military speak for Improvised Explosive Devices, and they're the devil's own invention.

These fearsome homemade weapons are responsible for many of the more than 1,700 deaths and 15,000 plus casualties suffered by U.S. and coalition forces since the invasion of Iraq two years ago this month. And they're getting more deadly and numerous.

"They've gone up exponentially in number and they're getting more powerful all the time," said Lt. Col. Michael Kurilla, whose 24th Infantry Regiment's First Battalion patrols the western half of this northern Iraq city that has the highest number of attacks by insurgents of any city in Iraq.

Col. Kurilla was among some 50 Army officers who briefed Gen. John Abizaid, commander of U.S. forces in the Gulf region, and Sen. Jack Reed (D-R.I.) on the military situation in Ninevah province on Easter Sunday at a coalition base near this city of two million, the third largest in Iraq.

Afterwards, the tall, handsome West Point graduate from Elk River, Minn., explained the challenge these devilish devices present to his 800-man unit.

When his battalion arrived in Iraq last October from Fort Lewis, Wash., it didn't find a single IED while patrolling the streets of Mosul. But in November, it found three, followed by 15 in December, 50 in January, and 134 in February. One of his soldiers was killed when one of his unit's heavily armored Stryker vehicles was destroyed, and many more have been injured.

"We're still getting plenty of detonations, it's almost constant," said Col. Kurilla, whose battalion has already earned 182 Purple Heart medals, given to those injured in combat.

Sgt. Loren Kirk, a member of the 25th Infantry Division's First Brigade Stryker combat team, described the constant danger posed by the IEDs.

"We go all over Mosul and everybody gets hit, even in the nice neighborhoods," he said. "We can go a week without getting hit. It just depends on where we are. We drive side-by-side with cars on the street. They tend to give us a wide berth, and because of VBEDS [Vehicle-based Explosive Devices], we try to keep them at least 50 yards away."

Kirk added, "It's all timing. We could roll down the road and drive by an IED and a minute later, a vehicle behind us will get hit."

Kirk, 37, took his unit's commander through the city's crowded streets to the briefing from its base about 15 minutes away. "Our mission is to get him where he needs to go, safely, escort troops or check on soldiers at a checkpoint."

The heavily armed 36,000-pound, eight-wheel vehicles were first introduced to Iraq in 2003 as a replacement for the 1980s era Abrams tanks and the less well-armored Hummers, which many units are still using while they wait for Strykers to be delivered.

Every one of the Strykers in Kirk's battalion has been hit by an IED at least twice, according to Specialist Seth Christie, who rides in a partially exposed position atop Kirk's Stryker.

So what's it like to take a hit from an IED?"

It scares the s--- out of you," said Christie, 24, who was slightly injured when his vehicle was hit by an IED in January and he was knocked back into the vehicle. "You feel it in your chest, you feel it in your teeth. Your lungs fill with smoke and everything goes black."

Christie's buddy, Specialist Donald Armino, also 24, agrees that IEDs are more numerous and powerful than a few months ago. "They're getting a lot bigger and a lot more sophisticated," he said, often concealing them more cleverly and magnifying their power by tying a half dozen or more 120-mm mortar shells together and setting them off by remote control, or using shaped charges that can penetrate six inches of steel.

An even more vivid description of the destructive power of IEDs was provided by four young Marine reservists from Chicago who were relaxing at the coalition's main base near the Baghdad airport while preparing to return home last weekend.

"What's it like?" said Cpl. Johnny Lebron, 31, whose unit driving armored Hummers found and disarmed 19 IEDs and was hit by 21 during six-and-a-half months in the northern province of Babil, a part of the Sunni triangle dubbed "the triangle of death."

"Well, it really rattles your cage. It's an experience you can't describe. For four or five seconds, time seems to stand still."

Sgt. Timothy Jensen, 26, added, "The explosion hits and then everything goes black and the breath is sucked out of your lungs. You feel like you're dead, floating in time-less space. The first thing you worry about is the Marine next to you. Once I know my Marines are good to go, we act on our objective."

But Sgt. Jensen conceded that it's hard to find those who place and detonate the IEDs. "You're really not going to be able to get on them because they use remote devices from a distance, and they're really hard to find."

Unlike the Marines, the soldiers in Mosul who are equipped with the heavily armed Strykers are thankful they have them.

"The Stryker is a fantastic vehicle, much better than an up-armored Hummer," said Sgt. Kirk. "We're really lucky to have them. I've got a lot of faith in this vehicle."

U.S. FORCES THWART MAJOR ESCAPE IN SOUTHERN IRAQ

CAMP BUCCA, IRAQ, Mar. 25, 2005.—U.S. military police Friday thwarted a massive escape attempt by suspected insurgents and terrorists from this southern Iraq Army base that houses more than 6,000 detainees when they uncovered a 600-foot tunnel the detainees had dug under their compound.

"We were very close to a very bad thing," Major Gen. William Brandenburg said Friday

after troops under his command discovered the tunnel that prisoners had painstakingly dug with the help of makeshift tools.

Within hours of the discovery on the first tunnel, a second tunnel of about 300 feet was detected under an adjoining compound in the camp, which holds 6,049 detainees.

The discoveries came just hours before Brandenburg, who commands Multinational Force detainee operations in Iraq, toured the camp with Gen. George Casey Jr., the top Army general in Iraq and commander of the Multinational Coalition, who was making his first visit to this remote desert camp in southwestern Iraq near the Kuwaiti border.

Brandenburg said the prisoners, who include Iraqis and suspected terrorists from other Arab countries, probably were waiting for the dense fog that often rolls in at night from the nearby Persian Gulf before attempting their escape."

We get fog after midnight in which you can't see 100 feet," he said. "I think they were waiting on poor visibility and I think there was a good chance they would have gotten out of the camp."

Brandenburg, whose command also includes the better known but smaller Abu Ghraib camp near Baghdad, said soldiers in charge of Camp Bucca suspected that an escape attempt might be in the offing because they had found a small tunnel in another part of the camp about five days ago, and had been told by detainees that other tunnels were being dug.

Brandenburg also said that in recent days there were "people outside the camp who we're not used to seeing," which was another indication that "something was going on."

Brandenburg, who was spending the night at the nearby Basrah airport while waiting for Gen. Casey to arrive from Baghdad Friday morning, said he was awoken at 1:30 a.m. by an officer from Camp Bucca who said, "Sir, you won't believe what we've found."

When Brandenburg and Casey arrived at Camp Bucca, they were shown the tunnel's exit point, which was outside the chain link fence and concertina wire that surrounds the camp's eight compounds, each of which contains more than 600 prisoners, and several smaller compounds.

The prisoners had used a cut-away five-gallon gas can attached to a 60-foot-long rope to haul the sandy soil out of the tunnel. They apparently used makeshift tools to dig and reinforce the tunnel, and covered the entry point inside the compound with a false floor made from wooden slats from their beds, which in turn they concealed under two feet of dirt.

The detainees disposed of the dirt they had dug from the tunnel by flushing it down their latrines, which gave camp officials another clue that something was amiss when workers emptying the latrines complained that the filters on their trucks were getting jammed.

Col. James Brown, the commander of the 18th Military Police Brigade that is in charge of Camp Bucca and Abu Ghraib, said two detainees tried to escape 10 days ago but were caught. He said the latest escape attempt was clearly planned to allow more than 100 prisoners to flee the camp.

Brown said it is reasonable to assume that other tunnels will be discovered in other parts of the camp.

Col. Brown said he made his troops view the movie, "The Great Escape," starring Steve McQueen, about a group of American prisoners in a World War II German POW camp, so they would think like people who were bent on escaping from his facility."

It's a great movie," he said. "The trouble is we tend to view life through the lens of who we are and not who somebody else is. There are a lot of good lessons for us there."

During Casey's tour of the camp, thousands of the prisoners watched silently and sullenly as he and his entourage walked past them, and as he climbed a watchtower for a panoramic view.

As Casey walked past the compound where the second tunnel was discovered, a soldier drove a large backhoe into the camp and began digging up the tunnel.

Camp officials also showed Casey a large collection of makeshift weapons taken from the detainees, including knives, slingshots, and even a fake flak jacket made from Muslim prayer shawls that resembled the real thing.

"I am never amazed at what I see," Brandenburg said of the ingenious technique used by the detainees in their escape attempt.

At the end of his tour, Casey presented a special medal to the young woman soldier, Specialist Lisa Wesson of Asheville, N.C., who discovered the larger tunnel during a routine investigation.

Camp Bucca is almost twice the size of Abu Ghraib, which was the scene of last year's prisoner abuse scandal that has prompted widespread changes in the handling of detainees. There are 3,243 detainees at Abu Ghraib, and another 114 after a camp near Baghdad International Airport, where Saddam Hussein and members of his deposed government are being held pending trials for crimes against humanity.

EMBED CAVALLARO SEES WAR FROM THE INSIDE

Baghdad, Mar. 31, 2005.—After four trips to report on the war in Iraq, no one understands the pluses and minuses of being embedded with the U.S. military better than Gina Cavallaro.

On the one hand, the former congressional aide and staff writer for the *Army Times* knows it would be impossible to do her job without relying on the military for logistical support and protection in the dangerous combat zones she routinely visits.

At the same time, she knows that the bonds she forms with soldiers and Marines make it more difficult to be an objective reporter, especially when one of them is killed or wounded.

So it's not surprising that the 45-year-old Hillary Swank look-alike was still trying to come to grips last week with the death of a 20-year-old soldier who had become her "buddy" and "little brother." Spc. Francisco Martinez, a forward observer in a field artillery unit, was killed by a sniper the day before while she was standing a few feet away.

"I haven't processed much of it yet," she said, struggling with her emotions as she prepared to return to Washington after nine weeks in Iraq.

"It's very difficult to write about. When we go out on a patrol, I feel that I need to get on the ground with the soldiers, and I have done that dozens of times, knowing it was dangerous. But I always know I'm here voluntarily, and the last thing I wanted to see was a soldier getting killed."

But Martinez, who was with a Second Infantry Division brigade combat team that was transferred from Korea last September, wasn't just another soldier.

"There's always one gregarious soldier who hangs out with reporters," she said. "He was my buddy, my shadow, my escort. He was like a little brother. He stuck by me to make sure I was safe. He was so young and so outgoing, and so proud of what he was doing."

She added, "I only knew him for a couple of days, but we had a lot in common. We both grew up in Puerto Rico, and when you are with someone in a combat environment, it doesn't take long to get to know them." The two often conversed in Spanish and talked about life in their native Puerto Rico.

Cavallaro had spent eight days with Martinez's unit in Ramadi, a hotbed of insurgent resistance 75 miles west of Baghdad in an area the soldiers call the "Wild West." While she was there, an IED (Improvised Explosive Device) killed four soldiers in an armored Humvee. "It was huge, a big bomb," she said. "They are using more and more of them, and they are also more snipers. I have to admit, I felt in danger out there. I felt I was also a target."

It was a routine patrol on a Sunday afternoon as Alpha Company searched a dangerous neighborhood for a sniper who had killed three soldiers and wounded several more. Cavallaro was taking a photograph when she heard a shot, very close by.

"I was probably six feet in front of him," she said. "I turned around and was horrified to see him lying on the ground."

Martinez was wearing body armor, but the bullet seemed to go under it, on the right side of his back. He was bleeding heavily and told her he couldn't feel his legs.

Medics quickly put Martinez in an armored Humvee and took him to an aid station only minutes away. Cavallaro rode with him, holding his hand and pleading with him in Spanish to keep breathing and not fall asleep.

The medics told her Martinez probably would make it and she watched as a medical evacuation helicopter took him to a field hospital. But a few hours later, she learned that he had died.

"It was a little bit more of an exclamation point to this trip than I wanted," she said. "It just hurts when you lose a friend. It really hurts."

For Cavallaro, who visited Iraq twice in 2003 and once in 2004, it was a brutal reminder of how much more dangerous Iraq has become for both soldiers and embedded journalists.

"Absolutely, it's become more dangerous," she said. "When I first came here, the IED's hadn't started and the insurgency didn't exist in any substantial way. I may be out of line saying this, but I agree with the military that only a small percentage of people are disrupting things here, but they're doing a pretty good job of it. There's never not a combat patrol. Whenever you go on patrol, it's always a combat situation."

Cavallaro, who writes for a predominantly military readership, has mixed feelings about journalists being embedded with troops.

"I don't know," she said when asked if it affects how she and other journalists report on the military. "I just think it makes it more difficult. I find the media is afraid to get around on its own in Iraq, and rightly so. They're relying more on the military to get them where they want to go, and as a result, the military is getting smarter about getting its own story told. It almost seems like a little bit of quid pro quo."

She added, "I don't necessarily consider that a bad thing. The military will get you around but it always wants to show you its new sewage plant."

Cavallaro was a reporter for the *San Juan Star* when she got a job as press secretary to then-Del. Carlos Romero Barcelo (D-P.R.), but decided her heart was still in reporting and answered an ad in the *Army Times*.

She says she still hears complaints from soldiers about negative coverage of the war. "The most frequent question I get is, 'Do people back home care about us? Do they know we're still here?'"

Asked for her view of how the war is going, Cavallaro says she's "not in a position to judge, but I do see the concept of Iraqi security forces being the key to what happens here."

However, she added that "there are some really impressive Iraqi army troops and

some really shoddy ones. But I've seen some American soldiers who get it. They're taking the Iraqis by the hand and showing them what the right looks like."

If there's one aspect of war reporting that Cavallaro is critical of, it's television. "I don't know why it is, but most soldiers tend to get their news from TV. Images are so strong. They are projected in chow halls all over Iraq, but it takes a dedicated effort for a soldier to look up news on the Internet."

And when Cavallaro returns to her newspaper's Springfield, Va., office, what will she be thinking about her last assignment?

"How much I hate leaving those soldiers behind," she said. "You can't be here and be embedded with soldiers and not care about them, no matter how hard core you are. It would take a really cynical person not to see them as individuals."

"I've seen reporters who are clearly anti-military, and I don't begrudge them that. It's their right. But in my writing and reporting here, I consider my readership—what would be of interest to the soldiers' families and relatives? I get a lot of emails from readers who want me to go hug their kids."

When she returns home, Cavallaro will continue to concentrate on the lives of the men and women in uniform she has left behind. "I see myself as chronicling their time here—their triumphs, their tragedies, their quality of life. I find the military as a fascinating theme for a writer. The stakes and risks are high, but it's incredibly rewarding."

A SECOND TRIANGLE IS BUILT IN IRAQ

BAGHDAD.—Much of the violence that has plagued Iraq in the two years since U.S. forces toppled Saddam Hussein has been planned and carried out by insurgents and terrorists based in the Sunni triangle north and west of this city of seven million people.

But another triangle, which had its origins in a chance meeting in Washington last June, appears to be paying off for the Bush administration's effort to create a fledgling democracy in Iraq, after Sunday's election of a prominent Sunni Arab as speaker of the newly elected national assembly. The meeting between the two men who were preparing to take over as America's top military and diplomatic officials in Baghdad set in motion a three-pronged strategy involving the U.S.-led coalition forces, the American Embassy and the Iraqi government.

The men are Gen. George Casey Jr., the Army vice chief of staff who had just been named commander of the multinational forces in Iraq, and John Negroponte, who was about to trade his job as U.S. ambassador to the United Nations for that of U.S. ambassador to Iraq.

Casey spoke about the meeting late last month. He was returning to Iraq after a short vacation that ended with him briefing President Bush and Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld at the White House. Casey flew back to Iraq aboard a 12-passenger C-37, the military version of the business jet favored by corporate CEOs and celebrities.

"Right after I found out I was going to Iraq, John was in town and we agreed to get together," Casey said. "He stayed over on a Saturday, and we met in the morning at the Pentagon."

The purpose of their meeting was to develop a plan to build on the Jan. 20 national assembly elections that would restore a measure of stability, allow the Iraqis to create a post-Saddam democratic government and begin to rebuild their devastated economy and infrastructure. They agreed to focus on the elections as the organizing point for their plan.

When Casey arrived June 28 at Camp Victory, the sprawling coalition headquarters

base outside of Baghdad, the first thing he and Negroponte did was put together a "red team" composed of top aides from Casey's staff, the U.S. Embassy, the State Department and the Central Intelligence Agency and its British counterpart.

"We felt we had to have a firm understanding of the enemy and the war we were fighting," Casey said. "I had our staff working on a plan that focused on the same basic questions, the nature of the enemy and its capabilities and intentions. After about 30 days, we both came up with a product and we merged them together and they pretty much reinforced each other."

The end result, Casey explained, was a plan that consisted of four elements.

First, it was decided that "the greatest threat, apart from the insurgents and foreign fighters, was people hoping for a return to Sunni dominance" of the Shiite majority and Kurdish minority. But it was clear that threat couldn't be eliminated by military force alone.

"You don't win a counterinsurgency [war] by military means," Casey said. "You win by integrating the political, economic and military to produce a common outlook, by cutting off the insurgents from popular support."

A second element was to build up the Iraqi security forces, which called for creating 27 Iraqi Army battalions. The first phase of that plan, "a huge training and equipping operation that is still going on," Casey said, was completed last month, and the next phase, creating the Iraqis' own command structure, is under way.

"We felt we had to bring the insurgency to a level that could be contained by Iraqi security forces while we helped them build a sufficient capacity to deal with it. But it was clear that Iraqi security forces were not ready to do that."

The third part of the plan was aimed at rebuilding Iraq's ruined economy.

"On the economic side, we inherited a hugely complicated and bureaucratic—I don't want to use the word 'mess,' but I guess I will. There were so many different [U.S.] agencies that had their fingers in it, we felt we had to get ourselves organized to deliver on the \$18 billion aid package" approved by Congress. "I'm not being critical of these guys, but they put the package together in Baghdad without consulting the people in the field."

The Casey-Negroponte plan increased the 230-plus economic aid and reconstruction projects that existed in June, 2004 to more than 2,000 last month, and Casey predicts projects to spend all \$18 billion will be in place by this fall.

The fourth part of the plan was a two-part communications strategy. "One was to drive a wedge between the insurgents and the population, to demonstrate that the insurgents and terrorists have nothing good to offer for Iraq," Casey said. "The other part was to try to change the image of the population toward the Coalition."

"People always want to know, are we winning the hearts and minds of the Iraqi people, and I say, 'No, that's not what we're here to do.' The people of Iraq will never welcome an occupying force. What we need is their consent."

Casey added, "All four of these lines of operation are working together in an integral way between us, the embassy and the Iraqi government. That triangle—we actually have a triangle in our plan—has the Iraqi government at the top, us at one corner and the embassy at the other."

But while Casey said he is encouraged by early progress in carrying out the "triangle strategy," he cautioned that success is far from certain. Casey, who earlier commanded the 1st Division in Kosovo, said he asked his

predecessor, Lt. Gen. Ricardo Sanchez, to compare the two countries.

"He said Iraq is 10 times harder."

FOR RHODE ISLAND'S REED, CODELS ARE SOLITARY AFFAIRS

KUWAIT CITY, Apr. 6, 2005.—During the Easter Week recess, when three other congressional delegations, consisting of 21 senators and House members, were visiting Iraq, the codel led by Sen. Jack Reed (D-R.I.), was conspicuous for several reasons.

First, Reed, a West Point graduate and former company commander in the 82nd Airborne, was the only member of Congress in his codel.

Second, instead of traveling with a battalion of aides like those with the other codels, he was accompanied only by his legislative assistant for military and foreign affairs, Elizabeth King; Lt. Col. Vic Samuel, an Army legislative liaison officer; and John Mulligan, the Washington bureau chief of the Providence Journal.

Third, instead of flying into Baghdad for a few hours of official briefings and then flying to Jordan or Kuwait at day's end, Reed spent the better part of four days hopscotching across Iraq, often aboard Blackhawk helicopters manned by National Guard units from Rhode Island; meeting with troops in some of the most dangerous parts of Iraq; and questioning top U.S. military and diplomatic officials, and Iraqi security forces as well.

Fourth, Reed—unlike Senate Minority Leader Harry Reid (D-Nev.)—wasn't making his first visit to this war-torn country, where some 150,000 American troops and 24,000 troops from 23 other member nations of the U.S.-led multinational coalition are battling Muslim insurgents and terrorists while trying to help create a new government and rebuild Iraq's shattered infrastructure.

And finally, none of the other congressional visitors can claim to have attended the U.S. Military Academy with Gen. John Abizaid, the overall commander of U.S. forces in the Persian Gulf region, or served in the Army with Maj. Gen. William Brandenburg, who oversees detainee operations in Iraq, including the infamous Abu Ghraib prison.

This was the fifth visit to Iraq for Reid, a 55-year-old Harvard lawyer and former instructor at West Point. All but the first, in 2002, have been solo affairs. And it may have been that one that convinced Reed to shun multimember codels.

He was traveling with a half-dozen other senators to Afghanistan, Iraq and Pakistan and nearing the end of the long, exhausting trip when the other members decided they didn't want to get up early the next morning to visit an Army special forces unit near the Pakistan border.

But Reed insisted they go, he recalled during an early-morning interview here before returning to the United States on Monday. "I got a little annoyed because these troops were expecting us to come."

Reed said he feels he can learn more about the actual progress, or lack of it, by traveling alone.

You can see a lot of places you couldn't necessarily go with others" because of security needs, he said as he wolfed down a breakfast of baked beans, scrambled eggs, fried potatoes and olives. "It helps me to be able to do it on my own. You can't substitute firsthand experience."

He added, "I like to characterize myself as someone who comes out here on a fairly frequent basis to look at what's happening on the ground and then reach judgments about what we can do to succeed."

Reed always makes it a point to visit troops from his native state. There are about

400 in Iraq, and he visited many of them, including Army troops in Baghdad, Marines in Fallujah, the helicopter crews and a field artillery unit in Mosul, and soldiers at a remote desert base in Kuwait.

Reed, a member of the Armed Services Committee, makes no apologies for being a critic of the administration's policy in Iraq, and to a lesser extent, Afghanistan.

"My job is to be critical about what's going on and what needs to be improved," he said, adding, "I think my criticism has been accurate, certainly in the operations in the region, in that we didn't organize ourselves for the appropriate occupation and stabilization" after Saddam Hussein was toppled, which happened two years ago this month.

"It took a long time to get the needed equipment in here for our troops. We made some serious errors in terms of de-Baathification efforts, rather than trying to incorporate the Sunnis, and disbanding the Iraqi Army. There's a litany of problems."

And although Reed has high praise for the military effort here, he added, "You have to understand that this is not over yet, militarily. And the notion that everything's fine disregards the resilience of this insurgency and the deep-seated political, historical and social forces that are at work."

"I think one of the greatest errors and misjudgments would be at this point, so to speak, to get out, because the area has one or two months of relative quiet—this is a long-term effort, and, in a way, the hardest part, even now, is to revamp an economic and political structure that doesn't have that many democratic tendencies."

Reed said Iraq has been "brought right back to almost where we began two years ago. And now we have the obligation to reinforce military success with political and economic progress, and the question is, do we have the resources and the capability to do that?"

Reed also said he feels that civilian agencies haven't done enough to rebuild Iraq's battered infrastructure by providing "the soft power that you need to stabilize the country."

"This is a major effort," he declared. "We've got to get it right. There are things that we're doing very well and again I'd say that if we don't, if we take our eye off the ball, we could find ourselves right back where we were six months or a year ago. This place has the annoying habit of every time you turn the corner, there's another corner. We might be turning the corner, but watch out."

BATTERED FALLUJAH KEY TO IRAQ

FALLUJAH, IRAQ, Apr. 7, 2005.—This devastated former insurgent stronghold west of Baghdad, where some of the worst violence—and one of the grisliest scenes—of the two-year war in Iraq took place, is shaping up as the key to the success or failure of the Bush administration's historic effort to reinvent Iraq.

That was evident last week as James Jeffrey, deputy chief of mission of the U.S. Embassy in Baghdad, came here to confer with the commander of the 23,000 Marines who still patrol this dangerous region and to meet with some two dozen local police and government officials, Arab sheiks and Sunni clerics.

"This is the future of Iraq," Lt. Gen. John Sattler, commander of the 1st Marine Expeditionary Force that drove Iraqi insurgents and foreign Muslim fighters out of the city in an epic 11-day battle last November, told the local leaders as Jeffrey stood by.

The salty-tongued Sattler, who was reassigned to Camp Pendleton, Calif., at the end of March, portrayed Fallujah as a crucial test of the U.S.-led multinational coalition's

ability to provide security, assure political stability and rebuild Iraq's shattered urban centers.

"If you can make Fallujah work, it becomes a status symbol and the whole Arab world will be looking at what they have done for Fallujah," he said.

Sattler and Jeffrey also made it clear that the prospects of reducing and eventually ending the commitment of some 175,000 U.S. and coalition troops in Iraq will be greatly enhanced if Iraqi security forces can be trained and equipped in sufficient numbers.

At the same time, they said, hundreds of millions of dollars must be spent in Fallujah on economic reconstruction by creating jobs and restoring basic services, including water, sanitation facilities and electricity.

"We're at the very beginning stages now," Sattler said. He and about a dozen other senior Marine officers gave Jeffrey an update on the military situation in their region and, in turn, heard Jeffrey describe the political situation and economic reconstruction effort before they met with the local leaders.

The meetings in Fallujah came almost exactly a year after the world was subjected to the ghastly scenes of the charred remains of several American contractors whose bodies were hung from a Fallujah bridge. The scene was the prelude to the bloody battle in November that drove insurgents from their fortified and well-armed base in Fallujah.

Jeffrey is running the U.S. Embassy until the arrival of Zalmay Khalilzad, the current ambassador in Afghanistan whom President Bush nominated Tuesday to replace John Negroponte as ambassador to Iraq. Jeffrey gave the Marines an update on the overall military, political and economic situation in Iraq.

He said coalition forces have made "tremendous progress" toward defeating the insurgent and al Qaeda elements in most areas of Iraq, although the violence directed against coalition forces and Iraqis who are cooperating with the coalition "is still very worrisome."

And he said that 100 50-man units of Iraqi Army and security forces, including local police, are in place, of which about 50 are ready to be deployed nationwide. "That's a huge difference and huge investment," he said, with between \$5 billion and \$6 billion already spent and about an additional \$10 billion committed by the end of this year.

But it's not the money, he said, "it's the mentoring and training that are important."

On the political front, he said the successful outcome of the Jan. 30 elections has provided important momentum, but he expressed concern about the vacuum that exists until the newly elected national assembly and its leaders are chosen.

The problem, he said, is that "the old government is not willing to take action, and the new government doesn't exist yet. We're a bit frustrated, but that's democracy."

Finally, on the economic reconstruction front, Jeffrey said \$100 million has already been spent on Fallujah, with another \$100 million in the pipeline.

"Let's face it: We're winning," he said. "It needs to be said that we are winning. This is a very, very, very difficult thing we're undertaking, but we're winning and we need to continue pouring resources into Fallujah."

Sattler acknowledged the difficulty of finding the right local officials and working with them. "There's dust on everyone here," he said. "So you have to go down until you find somebody without blood on his hands. That's the person you have to deal with."

But one Agency for International Development official said more and more local leaders are willing to cooperate in the rebuilding effort.

"We're beginning to see them at the table now, and they're beginning to ask questions.

We're shifting from one level to another. We're dealing with the Iraqi mind and not the U.S. mind. We're trying to deliver the goods, but it's going to be a long process. It's water running into one more house. It's electricity going into one more house."

Sattler pointed out that more than 2,000 government workers showed up for work in Fallujah the day before and "15,000 people came into town yesterday. There were less than a thousand in December."

A few days later, Sattler repeated his message while hosting Gen. John Abizaid, commander of all U.S. forces in the Persian Gulf region, and Sen. Jack Reed (D-R.I.).

"A year ago, we had an insurgency that operated with impunity inside Fallujah," Sattler said. But now there's a growing partnership between U.S. troops and Iraqi security forces that he said bodes well for the future.

Sattler said, "We get a lot of visitors here, but you haven't visited Iraq if you haven't visited Fallujah."

REGULATION OF 527 ORGANIZATIONS

Mr. DAYTON. Mr. President, earlier today, as a member of the Senate Rules Committee, I participated in a markup of legislation that purports to regulate the so-called 527 organizations. What started out as campaign finance reform legislation in the view of many, both Democrats and Republicans, in this body, unfortunately, turned, through the amendment procedure and the markup, into a very different kind of legislation.

I commend Senator LOTT, chairman of the Rules Committee. He was eminently fair throughout and gave each one of us an opportunity to present our amendments to be fully considered and voted upon. But one amendment that was introduced at the very outset, that was voted favorably upon by all members of the majority caucus as well as I believe one or two Democrats, but not nearly enough to carry the legislation, drastically shifted the bill to one that opens vast new opportunities for political action committees, special interests, to increase their contributions and for Members of Congress, Members of the Senate to direct those moneys to other political campaigns.

Specifically, the amendment that was adopted increased the contributions allowed to political action committees from \$5,000 to \$7,500. That is a 50-percent increase.

The amendment increased the amount of money that political action committees could contribute to national political parties from \$15,000 to \$25,000. That is a 67-percent increase. And it eliminated the restrictions on trade associations soliciting member companies for those contributions without prior approval of those companies as well as limitations on the number of times each year they could be solicited.

Most egregious, the amendment that was adopted allows Members of Congress to transfer unlimited amounts of money from their leadership political action committees to national parties

and to the political committees that are established and maintained by a national political party which includes such enterprises as the Democratic and Republican senatorial campaign committees, congressional campaign committees, and other subdivisions and political committees of the national parties that are used to directly attack Members of Congress for their reelections or to assist challengers or to assist incumbents.

It opened the door widely, broadly, in allowing Members of Congress to use their positions of power and influence to solicit these contributions from special interests on a year-round, round-the-clock basis and then turn those moneys over in unlimited amounts to all of these other political activities.

So at the same time this legislation purported to restrict the ability of individuals to make these kinds of large expenditures on behalf of political causes and candidates, it threw the door wide open for special interest groups to do exactly what they said they were prohibiting. It is a terrible step in the wrong direction. It is evidence, again, of why allowing incumbents to be involved in so-called election law regarding their own self-interest is akin to giving a blowtorch to a pyromaniac. They simply cannot resist the abuses that are available to them.

I urge my colleagues to look at this legislation cautiously as it proceeds to the Senate floor. It is a step in the wrong direction. I regret the action taken today.

HONORING OUR ARMED FORCES

SERGEANT JOHN W. MILLER

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, I wish to recognize today the passing of a fellow Iowan who has fallen in service to this country. Sergeant John W. Miller, of the Iowa Army National Guard Company, A, 224th Engineer Battalion, was killed by a sniper on April 12 in Ar Ramadi, Iraq, while providing security for a road-clearing operation. He was 21 years old and is survived by a father, Dennis, two brothers, James and Nathan, and a sister, Jessica, who live in the Burlington, IA area.

John Miller attended West Burlington High School and received his high school diploma from Des Moines Area Community College. He joined the Iowa Army National Guard in March of 2002 and was mobilized to go to Iraq in October of 2004. He was posthumously awarded the Bronze Star, Purple Heart, Global War on Terrorism Expeditionary Medal, Global War on Terrorism Service Medal, National Defense Service Medal, Army Good Conduct Medal, Army Service Ribbon, Army Reserve Component Achievement Medal and the Armed Forces Reserve Medal with "M" device for Mobilization. He was also promoted to sergeant posthumously.

I offer my condolences to John's family and friends. Sergeant Miller's battalion leader wrote that John "will